

May 30, 2007



DAGGER'S EDGE

IRAQ EDITION: VOLUME 1 ISSUE 14















"The Greatest Brigade Combat Team Ever Formed"





DAGGER'S EDGE

What Makes it Great

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Dagger Vision

The Dagger Brigade Combat Team will be trained and ready, fully deployable, disciplined, confident, dedicated and serving selflessly with pride.

We are caring of one another and sensitive to the needs of our Soldiers, family members and DA civilians.

We communicate accurately across the chain of command and work together as a combined arms team of teams.

We are responsible stewards of our Nation's treasure.

We are professionals and ambassadors of our Nation and responsible and respected guests in the Schweinfurt Community, and wherever we find ourselves.

We are flexible, motivated and fully capable of executing any assigned tasks to standard regardless of the challenges.

Picture Credits

- ★ (Cover page) Pfc. Sean Behan and Sgt. Clinton Rollings from, B Co, 1-5 CAV take cover while providing security during a company mission. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Jason Collins, 1st Battalion, 5th Cav.)
- ★ (Page 12) The Memorial Wall presented by Col. J. B. Burton and CSM John Fortune for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's fallen soldiers was displayed during a service. (US Army photo by Sgt. Lance Wall, 2nd BCT Public Affairs, 1st Inf. Div.)

**THE FOLOWING IS THE SPEECH GIVEN BY COLONEL J.B. BURTON AT THE DEDICATION OF
THE DAGGER MEMORIAL WALL ON MEMORIAL DAY 2007, IN BAGHDAD, IRAQ.**

The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them---and yet not withstanding, go out to meet it."

Welcome and thank you all for joining us here today for this Dagger Brigade Combat Team Memorial Day ceremony.

In a few short hours, Americans will be waking up to their own Memorial Day and to the official start of summer.

Americans will attend ceremonies similar to this in countless small towns, villages, and larger cities across the country and in United States cemeteries around the world.

They will gather to show their respect and gratitude for our nation's fallen service members who have given fully of themselves in defense of our nation and of our nation's freedom.

Let me read an extract of a letter I received from one of the Dagger BCT's partners from Weston, Connecticut:

- ***On behalf of the many citizens and civic organizations of Weston ... I would like to express our deepest appreciation to the Soldiers and families of the Dagger Brigade for your service to our country. Your commitment is extraordinary.***
- ***Through our association with the Brigade.... We have come to have a greater appreciation for words like dedication, valor and sacrifice.***
- ***e will honor you and your fallen and we will pray for your safe return.***

And so today, we pause along with all Americans for a moment to honor our fallen whose personal investment in their nation's freedom allow our citizens to realize the ideals that define what it means to be an American.

These fallen represent us all. They represent the very few of our great nation who have stood up and stepped forward to defend our nation against all enemies, at any cost.

They represent those who have recognized that freedom is only secured through the personal investment of citizens who cared so much about the future of a nation, than they willingly went forward into harms way. Through generations --courageous and selfless patriots have secured our nation's liberties, and they have done so at the greatest price. When it has mattered most, the brave few of our nation have stepped forward and answered a call to arms—duty bound, with courage and undaunted determination which stands as an inspiration to us all.

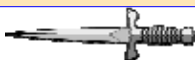
We honor the memory of lives lost in

defense of our nation's freedom and in defense of a promise for those less fortunate.

We mourn their loss, while giving thanks that our nation produces such citizens who do not shirk from their responsibilities as citizens of the greatest nation in the history of humankind.



Col. J. B. Burton gives a speech at the Memorial Day service that presented the Dagger Memorial Wall. (US Army photo by Sgt. Lance Wail, Public Affairs, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



The names on this wall are a solemn reminder to us all of the true costs of freedom. They represent the very finest that our nation has to offer – through their sacrifice they have advanced the promise of liberty and freedom for all.

Today, let us remember that our mission here is vital, ... it is for keeps and we—our nation's warriors, collectively hold the line—out front, and far away to protect our families, our future and what we—as Americans-- believe in.

Inside us all---let us rejoice in a simple pride—to have served alongside such heroes as these -- dedicated to the strength and survival of our nation—and dedicated to the promise of a better life for those terrorized and subdued by evildoers who place no value on human life, and who offer nothing but chaos and despair unless they are defeated by forces who value the dignity of human life.

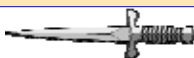
These fallen warriors have fulfilled the highest responsibility of citizenship—our nation, as do we---remain eternally grateful for their sacrifice—and for the hope that they represent.

As this ceremony draws to a close—let us give thanks—thanks that our nation produces patriots such as these—let us pray for their families and friends—and let us ask only that the souls of these Soldiers be welcomed as heroes and posted in overwatch of us all, as we continue our mission here...

First team!
Duty first!!



The Memorial Wall presented by Col. J. B. Burton and CSM John Fortune for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's fallen soldiers was displayed during a service. (US Army photo by Sgt. Lance Wall, Public Affairs, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)





DAGGER'S EDGE



Chaplain's Focus on Faith

Keep Telling Mom "Thanks"

Story by CH (Capt.) Shawn Hunze

The recent celebration of Mother's Day is a good reminder for us to openly appreciate all that our Moms have done for us. I prefer to call it "Mom's Day." Just about any woman can be a mother by giving birth, but I see a "Mom" as that woman who shares God's love with a son or daughter. They share in the ups and downs of their children and are loving and faithful. Let's think for a minute about how God has so richly blessed us with past Moms.

Going all the way back to the beginning of time we can find Eve, the very first Mom. She not only gave birth to Abel, Cain, and Seth, she

also brought them up in the love of God. We also know that God considered Eve a special woman in that He promised us our Savior through her.

As one reads through the Old Testament, one can look at the different genealogies starting with Adam and Eve and follow them all the way to the first chapter of Matthew. His Gospel gives us several generations up to Joseph and Mary. Mary was another Mom God considered special in that she is the loving and proud Mom of Jesus. She would also go through great anguish as she saw Him hanging on the cross. When she found out why He did this I would imagine that she would have been the proudest Mom in history.

Eve and Mary were used as God's instruments for world-wide impact as their children would start and save all humanity. Maybe your Mom isn't quite as famous, but your Mom has changed at least one life - yours - by giving you life, support, encouragement, and herself at times to help make you successful in your life.

So even as we move on from Mom's Day, take some time to thank and praise your Mom for the many times she has been there for you in good times and bad times. Many of us can also thank our Moms for raising us in the love of God and teaching us about our Savior. Even some Moms have a hard time actually saying how proud they are of their children. But if you look closely, you can see her saying "I love you" in her own way.

Just as Mary could be proud of Jesus because of what He did on the cross, so our Moms can be proud of their Soldier-children because of their loyalty to America, defending others, and dedication to their job.

Our heavenly Father has indeed blessed all of us with His love through our Moms. I hope you will be thankful to God for your Mom, and express openly your gratitude to her for what she has done for you in giving you life, love, encouragement, support.

God bless you.



CH (Capt.) Shawn Hunze conducts a religious service while at an outpost in Baghdad. (US Army photo by Sgt. David Kress, chaplain assistant/NCO)





DAGGER'S EDGE


**HHC, 2nd BCT
Silver Lions**

The Silver Lions of HHC, 2nd BCT, were each treated to at least one box of Girl Scout cookies this week, thanks to a 5-year old girl from San Saba, Texas. Casey Mathis, of Troop 291, while doing her Troop's annual fundraiser from the sale of Girl Scout cookies, gave her customers an option that they don't normally hear. She asked if they would like to buy a box of cookies for the Soldiers in Iraq. As a result of her efforts and the support of the community of San Saba, she was able to mail nearly 200 boxes of cookies to her cousin, Capt. Erik Booker, HHC Company Commander. The cost of shipping the cookies, which was nearly two hundred dollars, was covered by a generous donation from Golding Motors Incorporated, a local car dealership. "This is a fine example of true patriotism and support for our Soldiers. I'm proud of Casey and all the members and leaders of Troop 291 for their wonderful support," said Capt. Booker.

Cookie Monster Saves the Day

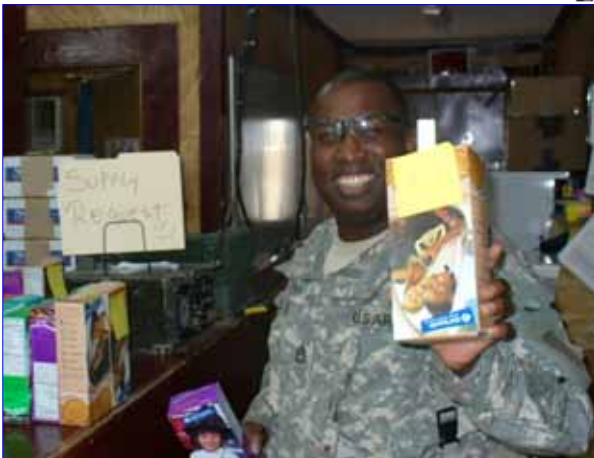
Story by Capt. Mark Crowder



All the cookies are neatly placed and ready for pickup by the sections. (US Army photo by Capt. Mark Crowder, XO, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



Sgt. First Class Mullen holding on tightly to the cookies for the S2 section as he ponders which one he will eat first. (US Army photo by Capt. Mark Crowder, XO, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



Sgt. First Class Vance showing which cookies are his favorite out of the cookies picked up for S1 section. (US Army photo by Capt. Mark Crowder, XO, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



Capt. Erik Booker and Capt. Mark Crowder take a moment to pose with the cookies. (US Army photo by Sgt. Lenz, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)





DAGGER'S EDGE


**1-26 Infantry
Blue Spaders**

Humanitarian Aid

Story by 1st Lt. Dan Morkes

Another day dawns and the Soldiers of Apache Company, Task Force 1-26 Infantry Regiment, the 'Blue Spaders' prepare for another important mission in their sector of the Iraqi capital.

Every day the American and Iraqi Security Forces in Baghdad are making progress in quelling the sectarian violence that plagues the streets. Today, the warriors of Alpha Company plan to continue that trend by conducting a humanitarian aid mission into one of the poorer parts of their area. The mission is two-fold. One part is to help the needy by providing them with some relief. The second part is to gain an understanding of the atmosphere in that neighborhood to determine the likelihood of it being used by insurgent groups.

Shortly after sunrise Alpha Company's Green, White and



Green and HQ Platoons unload the truck. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Dan Morkes, 1st Battalion, 26th Inf. Reg.)

Headquarters Platoons depart the base on their way to the objective apartment complex. The Company has been forward deployed to a combat base close to their sector, so the trip to the target area is short and they arrive without incident.

While the up-armored humvees of Green Platoon and the LMTV cargo truck of HQ Platoon pull into the compound where the apartments are located, White Platoon's Bradley Fighting Vehicles cordon off both ends of the street, preventing any vehicles from gaining access to the area. Once security is established, Staff Sgt. Aaron Whitty, of Elyria, Ohio, in charge of the outer cordon, calls over his radio to alert the inner cordon established by Green Platoon. Sgt. First Class Cesar Colon, from Puerto Rico, Green Platoon Sergeant, acknowledges the outer security and deploys his fire teams to the LMTV in the mid-

(1-26 INF Continued on page 8)



Green Platoon stacks the humanitarian aid before the operation. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Dan Morkes, 1st Battalion, 26th Inf. Reg.)





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(1-26 INF Continued from page 7)

dle of the compound.

The Soldiers from Green Platoon assist the HQ LMTV crew set up a barrier around the truck with wire. The local Iraqi residents, at first afraid of the Americans, begin to come forth from their doorways when they see the food, water, and school supplies getting off-loaded from the back of the large vehicle. They realize that the Apaches are there to help them and soon the effectiveness of the wire is evident when the LMTV area becomes surrounded with dozens of adults and scores of children, all eager for something.

Within a few minutes the soldiers have offloaded and stacked all of the items needed in today's mission. 2nd Lt. Paul Janker, from Springfield, KY, Green Platoon Leader, grabs a humanitarian food bag and his interpreter as he leads a fire team armed with bags and water to the nearest front gate. He directs his men to give each family two bags and a package of water each before the excess is handed out indiscriminately. At the house

house and three-story apartment in the complex. The fire teams bring aid to the doorway of over sixty families in the neighborhood, meeting them face to face and providing them with tips cards and asking about the area. Once all of the homes have been accounted for, the other Soldiers guarding the LMTV are allowed to hand out the excess supplies.

All of the Iraqis have come back for seconds, thirds, and fourths. The Apaches distribute the remaining food, water, and backpacks in record time to the local people. Before long it is all gone and the Apaches are quick to disperse the crowd around the truck, wind the wire back up, and turn the truck around for departure.

Sgt. First Class Colon alerts his fire teams to mount back up and then signals Staff Sgt. Whitty in the outer cordon that inside is ready to return to base. White Platoon acknowledges. The Bradley's and humvees turn around and leave a hole in their formation. As one Green Platoon exists the apartment complex with the HQ LMTV in the mid-




Green Platoon goes door to door with HA to ensure EVERYONE gets an equal amount of the aid. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Dan Morkes, 1st Battalion, 26th Inf. Reg.)

he hands out tips cards and makes conversational inquiries into the safety and security of the area. Meanwhile other Soldiers take extensive photos of the area and the people.

This same routine is conducted throughout every

ple. The rest of Green moves in between White's vehicles and the Bradleys anchor the front and rear of the formation.

All vehicles call up their ready status and the convoy moves out as quickly as it came. The Iraqi people wave thanks and continue to ask for more as the American patrol leaves. Back at base the Platoons conduct an AAR about the operation. The security was well established and broken down. The mission itself was successful in providing relief to the people, but the atmospherics of the place were not promising in any insurgent cell activity. The Apaches are not disappointed that the insurgents were not there, but in the fact

that they found no lead today in the cells that still threaten the people in their sector. More determined than ever, the Apaches prepare to continue to seek and destroy the enemy while protecting and helping the citizens of free Iraq. 





DAGGER'S EDGE



**1-325th AIR
Lets Go**

Providing Medical Aid to People of Hurriyah

Story by Sgt. Juan Santiago

On 8 May 2007, the Iraqi Ministry of Health along with Paratroopers from 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment conducted a joint medical operation to provide much needed medical attention to the people of Hurriyah.

The Iraqi Ministry of Health spearheaded in the operation with four physicians providing medical attention to patients. Coalition forces also provided two Army surgeons, a Physician's Assistant, and nearly a dozen medics to help screen and process all of the patients. This is the second operation in two months in which the Ministry of



Staff Sgt. Larry Metcalf holds an Iraqi child while Pfc. Willie Green gives her an immunization shot. (US Army photo by Sgt. Juan Santiago, 1-325 Airborne Infantry)

As the patients left the clinic, children were handed toys, t-shirts, Iraqi flags, school supplies and personal hygiene items. Their parents were handed blankets, vitamins for their children, boxes of perishable goods and a brochure with information on how to contact Coalition Forces for tips on terrorist activity. Operations of this magnitude help the government of Iraq and Coalition Forces build trust among the local population within the battalion's area of operation and give the unit an opportunity to gain an understanding of the atmospherics within the community.

Paratroopers from Alpha Company, 1-325th AIR, provided security for the duration of the operation; conducting crowd control, traffic control, and over-watch security while members of Echo Company, 1-325th AIR, provided transportation and helped establish support infrastructure.

As the day came to an end, the locals showed their appreciation for the care they had been given thanks to the Ministry of Health and Coalition Forces. Children were seen giving a thumbs up to the caregivers, and mothers were smiling; rare sights in a Hayy normally afflicted with violence and terror.



Pfc. Willie Green gives a local Iraqi child an immunization shot while the child's mother watches. (US Army photo by Sgt. Juan Santiago, 1-325 Airborne Infantry)

Health has worked side by side with the Paratroopers of 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment.

In addition to providing immunization shots for the local children, the medical providers screened over 400 patients, treating everything from minor bumps and bruises to severe illnesses and mental disabilities. The medical team also donated boxes of medical supplies to the Hurriyah Clinic #2 to augment the clinic's pharmaceutical supplies.





DAGGER'S EDGE



2-12 Cavalry Thunder Horse

Making 2-12 Cavalry History

Story by Sgt. Michael Leonhardy

On May 11th, 2007, Petty Officer 1st Class (PO1) James Hubbell made history in the 2nd Battalion 12th Cavalry Regiment when he was awarded the Combat Action Badge (CAB).

When PO1 Hubbell first arrived in 2-12 CAV he was just known as PO1 Hubbell. "As time went on, I acquired many different nicknames," recalled PO1 Hubbell. "It seems like each person has a different nickname for me. I can have one person come in and ask for the EWO (Electronic Warfare Officer) and another come in and ask, "Where's the DUKE guy?"

PO1 Hubbell frequently went on patrol with the companies to make sure their systems worked properly. While on patrol with Alpha Company, 2-12 CAV, PO1 Hubbell recalls, "A rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) came flying in. I then realized this was not going to be a routine mission; the element



Petty Officer 1 James Hubbell takes a moment to have a photo taken with Lt. Col. Nickolas. (US Army photo by Sgt. Michael Leonhardy, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cav., 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

was caught in an ambush and I was right there with them. I knew that I was in good hands with the Platoon, I knew that if I just listened to the NCO he would keep me safe like he does his Soldiers."

This attitude demonstrates just how much PO1 Hubbell has learned about the Army since being attached to 2-12 CAV. Even though PO1 Hubbell is a professional and an expert in his own specialty of electronic warfare, he feels that "when it comes to tactical warfare, I know I have to trust the guys on the ground." As the platoon engaged the enemy, 2nd Platoon Squad Leader Sgt Adrian Rosas instructed PO1 Hubbell to engage an insurgent on a rooftop. "He didn't have to tell me twice," laughed PO1 Hubbell, "I fired exactly where he told me to and if the whole experience wasn't bad enough the vehicle I was riding in was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device." Through out his experience with 2-12 CAV, PO1 Hubbell has learned much and said "All in all, I have a new found respect for what these maneuver units do on a day to day basis and I have experienced things that most Navy personnel will never endure in their careers."



Petty Officer 1 James Hubbell receiving a COA from CSM Charlie Payne. (US Army photo by Sgt. Michael Leonhardy, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cav., 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)





DAGGER'S EDGE



2-32 FA Proud Americans

Service Support... It Ain't as Easy as it Looks

Story by 1st Lt. Chris Lowry

Flashback: So there we were, southern California at the National Training Center (NTC). This was supposed to be the ultimate test of our platoon. It was supposed to be the culmination of all of our training as a Forward Support Company (FSC). We were well-rehearsed and trained to standard in all aspects of Service Support, everything from vehicle load plans to Combat Logistic Patrol (CLP) battle drills. According

to NTC standards we did exceptionally well. We were ready for deployment... Or were we?

Fast-forward to present day. As you may have already guessed, things did not turn out the way we had planned. Instead of running CLP, we were instructed to do something that none of us had ever done before. We were told that we were to be one of the battalion's infantry platoons.

I know what you are thinking, "what does a service support platoon know about operating in the combat arms

world?" Well, to be quite honest, we did not know much at the time. We had been training for the past year and a half doing nothing but combat logistic patrols. We had to cram a year of training into a little less than 10 days, because we were to augment an infantry company as it conducted route reconnaissance and observation missions for Arrowhead Strike IX. Since we were only operating at night, it was mandatory that we work only in black-out conditions. Luckily, we were already well trained in night operations from conducting our CLPs, so we incorporated that experience into our new mission of dismounted patrols. We went straight from the crawl phase to the run phase and were expected to function as a fully-trained infantry platoon. The standards were set forth by the infantry company Commander we were to operate under, all we had to do was meet them.

On the first night of operations, I could tell the guys were a little nervous and to be quiet honest, I was nervous myself. I had butterflies the size of a 10K generator flying around in my stomach. It felt like the night of the big game, and for us it was the big game. This was the time to show all those people who think the service support branches should be "in the rear, with the gear" that we could hang with the big dogs. And you know what? That is exactly what we did. We ran with the big dogs and not only met the standard, but exceeded it on multiple occasions.

First Platoon / G Company is now a full-time maneuver element, conducting the full spectrum of "combat arms" missions. We do everything the combat arms guys

(2-32 FA Continued on page 14)



Staff Sgt. Robert Sarver coordinates with Iraqi Soldiers while out on patrol. A Motor Transport Operator by MOS, SSG Sarver patrols regularly with 1 platoon, Company G. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Christopher Lowry, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery)





DAGGER'S EDGE

Lightning Assistance III

Story by Capt. Warrick Craig



1-7 FA First Lightning

On an early morning in the quiet neighborhood just south of Abu Gharib Market, Task Force Lightning Soldiers pulled into an open dirt area encircling the Al-Alaquaim Boys School. Time was of the essence; they quickly dismounted their vehicles and began searching the school and the surrounding area looking for anything out of the ordinary. After the search was complete, 1LT Stewart Whitson radioed back to the Task Force's command post that the school was secure—Task Force Lightning's third Medical Operation

Force Lightning's Physicians Assistant, position the Iraqi Army (IA) medics and doctor. Signs of anticipation could be seen on everyone's face as 1st Lt. Shreve huddled his team of caregivers together for a final brief. Soldiers understood that during the next few hours they would be part of a special mission.

With final preparations inside the school feverishly in progress, lines of people started to form outside the Task Force's outer cordon. The two entry control points (ECP), manned by both IA Soldiers and Task Force Lightning Soldiers began to swell with residents anxiously waiting for an opportunity to have their medical issues examined.



1LT Paul Shreve gives guidance to Iraqi Army Medics. (US Army photo by Capt. Matthew Angliss, HHB, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division).

Once examination rooms were ready, the ECPs started letting residents into the perimeter. At first, people were hesitant and the examinations slowly sputtered along, but after an hour everyone started to relax and a rhythm developed. Bushra, a young Iraqi woman standing in line for treatment, spoke

(MED-OP) was now underway.

With security established, Soldiers from Task Force Lightning, 1-7 Field Artillery, Charlie Company 299th Forward Support Battalion and the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, filed into the school and quickly set up several medical examination rooms. As Soldiers carried medical supplies into the different examination rooms, the Task Force's interpreters worked to help 1st Lt. Paul Shreve, Task

through an interpreter, "I cannot thank you enough," and the Iraqi Army said, "we love them, the people here need this."

Inside, the school the kids were clinging to their parent's legs as interpreters and Soldiers gently guided patients from station to station ensuring they received the appropriate level of medical attention. One of the most experienced medics

(1-7 FA Continued on page 15)





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1-18 Infantry Vanguards

Vanguard Soldiers help Iraqis Clean up their Streets

Story by 1st Lt. Michael Weiskoff

Soldiers from C 1-18 "Charlie Rock" worked with Iraqi National Police and local leaders to clean the streets of the Sadiyah neighbor-

hood of South West Baghdad. Rock Soldiers and leaders organized the event with the leadership of the 1-2-1 INP battalion and with key leaders in the Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) for Sadiyah. Rock and the Police provided security while trash and sewage trucks that the NAC provided cleaned the streets of Sadiyah. The NAC leaders also motivated the people of Sadiyah to turn out and help in the cleaning effort. The widespread participation in the cleaning effort is an encouraging step in the Vanguards efforts to inculcate a sense of civic responsibility in the

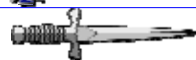


SGT Steven Thomas discusses the work with a contractor. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Michael Weiskoff, 1st Battalion, 18th Inf. Reg., 1st Inf. Div.)

inhabitants of AO Vanguard. The success in providing sewage and trash trucks also showed the locals that the NAC representative and the Government of Iraq can deliver the necessary services to make their lives better. The cleaning showed how much can be accomplished through cooperation between locals, NAC leadership, Iraqi Security Forces, and Coalition Forces. The cleaning also had several practical benefits. The clean-up improved the quality of life for the locals by creating a more hygienic and pleasant environment that will encourage the local markets to thrive. More importantly, however, removing the trash makes the streets of Sadiyah safer, by removing hiding places for improvised explosive devices that target Coalition Forces, police and civilians alike.



Capt. Pat Camunez coordinates with INP Commanders. (US Army photo by 1st Lt. Michael Weiskoff, 1st Battalion, 18th Inf. Reg., 1st Inf. Div.)





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1-77 Armor Steel Tigers

Tiger 6 News From The Front

Story by Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson

Greetings to all once again from Ramadi as our Soldiers remain focused and committed to transitioning full responsibility for security operations to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Of course, they are able to remain focused because of the unparalleled effort our Rear Detachment and Family Readiness Group make in regards to aiding our family members and keeping them informed. This month, I would like to dedicate this edition to our Spouses; you are the ones who keep our households together, the kids straight and handle the many other responsibilities which we as Soldiers, have no clue about while we are away. Thank you!

On 15 April, The Task Force executed our second major offensive (Operation Kangaroo) with our Iraqi partners, once again launching the largest and most complex combined operation in Ramadi history. Operation Kangaroo was a deliberately planned and spectacularly executed mission. It brought security and stability

to an area where the terrorists had been active in over the last month. The Iraqi Army and Police were intimately involved in the gathering of intelligence and planning of the mission, and assumed the lead during rehearsals and execution. The mission was a total success and included over 250 Iraqi Police officers, 160 Iraqi Army soldiers, 250 Iraqi Provincial Security Force officers (formally the Emergency Response Unit), 210 US Marines and over 250 US Soldiers. This offensive also facilitated the establishment of our newest Joint Security Station, JSS SUWA, where we will maintain a permanent presence in the neighborhoods with our Iraqi partners to secure and stabilize the area. This will allow for economic growth and the establishment of a district level civil government that is representative of the local populace.

All family members and STEEL TIGERS around the world should be extremely proud of our dedicated Warriors and the missions they accomplish daily to bring stability and a better life to the citizens of Iraq. Thank you for your continued support of these fine Soldiers through your letters and packages, and please rest assured, we will complete this mission. Until next time, **BLOOD ON THE AXE!** 🗡️

(2-32 FA Continued from page 11)

do with not only less training, but different equipment and a variety of different MOSs. We all have different types of backgrounds and schooling within the platoon. We have communications specialists, truck drivers, mechanics, and cooks, as well as fuel, wrecker, and crane operators. Some might look at that as a disadvantage, but I look at it as a major advantage. We are a wide assortment of Soldiers put into an extraordinary situation, but we have risen to the challenge and exceeded everyone's expectations. 🗡️



1st Lt. Chris Lowry, with his interpreter, discusses recent patrols with an Iraqi Army Soldier. 1st Lt. Lowry, a Transportation Officer, is now the platoon leader of 1 plt., Company G, who patrol the streets of Baghdad with service support Soldiers. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Robert Sarver, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery)






DAGGER'S EDGE

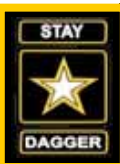
(1-7 FA Continued from page 12)

on the Iraqi team is Staff Sgt. Ahmed, a Troop Medical Clinic (TMC) medical assistant. He has two and a half years of education in Family Medicine from the Baghdad Medical Institute. "I really enjoy the work that I am doing, I like helping people," he remarks. His goal is to learn about different medicines and in order to do so he spends much of his time researching in his pharmacist's encyclopedia booklet for the correct Iraqi translation. 1st Lt. Kadhem, 3/3-6 IA TMC Manager, states, "Staff Sgt. Ahmed is my TMC Chief and he is the best medical assistant in the brigade." Before the medics conducted their exam they handed out stuffed animals to a son or daughter of one of the patients. The small gesture helped to lighten the atmosphere and distract the children long enough to allow the medics to readily pinpoint the nature of their discomfort or illness. Two hours later, hundreds of patients had been seen and they were exiting the school with smiles on their faces.



Saad, a student at the school is evaluated in one of the classrooms. (US Army photo by Capt. Matthew Angliss, HHB, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division).

After a complete examination, they were guided to the schools exit where they received a food basket from the IA Soldiers and a few words of encouragement. The exchange between the IA Soldiers and the local nationals brought smiles to everyone's faces. The IA Soldiers always embrace the opportunity to give back to their fellow Iraqis. Even with beads of sweat dripping off their foreheads, everyone recognized the positive impact of the MED -OP. Operation Lightning Assistance III provided medical assistance to over 800 local nationals; in addition, the Task Force demonstrated to the Abu Gharib community that Coalition Forces not only provide security, but also humanitarian assistance. 



STAY DAGGER STAY ARMY ARMY STRONG





DAGGER'S EDGE


**C 101 MI
Cobras**

Tactical HUMINT Team in Ramadi

Story by Capt. Angel Winstanley

Over the past few days I spent some quality time with Tactical Human Intelligence Team (THT) 177 attached to 1-77 Armor, located in Ramadi. The team has recently been pared down to two Soldiers, Sergeant Brandon Parks and Specialist

Stephen Stanton. THT 177 works extremely hard and is doing an outstanding job of providing intelligence information for 1-77 AR targeting. A typical week for the team consists of meeting four or five times a week with local nationals and assisting the Iraqi Army. Every morning they wake up and eat breakfast, briefly talk to their wives at the phone center, and then start their busy day.

The few days I was in Ramadi, I witnessed their hard work first hand when I traveled the area of operations and attended a couple of meetings with the team. Sergeant Parks explained that they will go out and talk to various individuals and gather as much information as possible to assist the task force in mission planning. During one particular meeting, the team was able to per-



1-77 Armor THT out in Ramadi, Iraq speaking to the Local Nationals, of C 101 Military Intelligence, 2nd Brigade 1st Infantry Division. (US Army photo taken by unknown individual of 1-77 Armor, 2nd Brigade 1st Infantry Division.)

suade an individual, who usually does not say a lot, to talk about significant information.

After the meeting we were invited to dine with them and we graciously accepted. Sergeant Parks explained that on several occasions he has gotten sick from the food, though he will continue to eat so as not to show disrespect. On this occasion the food was good and Sergeant Parks was just fine.

Sergeant Parks explained that when 1-77 AR arrived in Ramadi, there were numerous hostile events directed against Coalition Forces, but now there are only a few. Of course 1-77 AR's area of operations in Ramadi is different than Baghdad. This is partially due to coalition forces in Ramadi winning over more local support by improving their living conditions. This also has caused the local nationals to be more cooperative with coalition forces by assisting in locating weapons caches and insurgent hideouts.



Spec. Stephen Stanton before a mission in Ramadi, Iraq of C 101 Military Intelligence, 2nd Brigade 1st Infantry Division. (US Army photo by Sgt. Brandon Parks of C 101 Military Intelligence, 2nd Brigade 1st Infantry Division.)





DAGGER'S EDGE



Task Force Justice
"...Tested in the
Crucible of
Combat."

at FOB Justice are taking proactive measures to battle the blaze.

Before each mission, Soldiers pack coolers with ice and place one in every humvee. By doing this, each patrol has access to cold drinks as well as ice needed for treating heat casualties.

Machine gunners can't complain up in the turret. They have a continuous nice breeze and are shaded by sniper screening while roaming the simmering concrete jungle.

The best part of summer is the ice cream. Ice cream shops are natural gathering spots for

Hot Fun in the Summertime

Story by Capt. Cassidy Eaves



Spc. Chad Owen, MP Platoon, practices his flip dive at Freedom Rest. (US Army photo by Spc. James Lierer, TF Justice)

locals and a great place for our troops to discuss concerns with locals. People eating ice cream tend to not be as angry as those who are not eating ice cream. It's a natural morale booster. That would explain why Baskin & Robbins Ice Cream is so readily available to Soldiers deployed in the Middle East.

The Task Force Justice leadership has begun scheduling Soldiers for Freedom Rest, a resort-like compound with a nice swimming pool and high dives up in the clouds. SPC Anthony Woods, Military Police Platoon, says that Freedom Rest, "is beyond cool and definitely relaxing." The Task Force allowed Soldiers that went on R&R early to take a break. The rest is just as important for the spirit and psyche of the Soldiers as physical training is for the body. The only thing missing from Freedom Rest is our spouses and friends from back home. Too bad this is only the beginning of the heat wave. But the start of a new season means we are that much closer to coming home to our loved ones. Thanks to all family, friends, and supporters of Task Force Justice for your unwavering support.



Right to left, ORF members Sgt. David Crebo, Pfc. George Moore, 1st Lt. Steve DuPerre, Sgt. Toby Potier, Spc. Justin Graves, and Sgt. Daniel Alonzo discuss how they can perfect their synchronized swimming routine. Seriously, they did. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt. John Garcia, TF Justice)





DAGGER'S EDGE



1-5 Cavalry Knights

TF 1-5 Cav's Safe Neighborhoods

Story by Sgt. John Androski

The central tenet of the Baghdad Security Plan is to protect all citizens of Baghdad. To accomplish this objective, military and civil leaders have been establishing barriers around certain communities in western Baghdad. These safe neighborhoods encapsulate local community interests while providing external security for the bordering populace. The existence of these safe neighborhoods has recently been called controversial, as some interpret their purpose as a means for dividing the population along sectarian lines. Nothing could be further from the truth. These safe neighborhoods have effectively tied communities together in two different, but mutually strengthening defensive measures that deny anti-Iraqi Forces (AIF) the ability to move freely in and out of Baghdad. These communities augment the existing Baghdad Security Belt (BSB). The leading example of this unique security application of turning protective neighborhoods into safe neighborhoods has been conducted by TF 1-5 CAV, who currently operate in western Baghdad.

This large and diverse area of operations (AO), commonly referred to as AO BLACK KNIGHT, buffers the outer most edge of Baghdad city. AO BLACK KNIGHT draws the western most limits of city territory and then follows an almost linear line through suburban neighborhoods ending in the densely populated downtown area. As holding a presence in the western most part of Baghdad - AO BLACK KNIGHT has been supportive of

the outer-ring of obstacles that encircles the city of Baghdad.

These obstacles serve as a blocking position disrupting insurgent activities from flowing freely into the city. This obstacle effort has greatly reduced the flow of weapons, ammunition and other insurgent supplies from moving east on the historic smuggling routes from and through the Al Anbar province. The BSB has acted like a shield for denying the enemy into areas that once had open freedom of movement.

With outer access into Baghdad closely monitored and disrupted, the secondary and most visible blocking position, the safe neighborhoods, have added additional security measures at the neighborhood level. This series of interlocking safe neighborhoods along the Western edge of Baghdad has made it even more difficult for AIF to smuggle arms ammunition and explosives into, and around Baghdad.

It is this second series of interlocking safe neighborhoods along the Western edge of Baghdad that has drawn the majority of criticism. AO BLACK KNIGHT currently has two major constructed safe neighborhoods. The first is in the Baghdad neighborhood of Ameriya which has been functional for almost nine months and the second is in the adjoining Baghdad neighborhood of Khadra.

These barriers have improved Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces' ability to root-out insurgent activities and have increased neighborhood awareness. This increased awareness has allowed citizens to directly participate in denying AIF activity in their areas by calling CF and ISF when they see barriers being tampered with. This increase in local accountability has translated into increased economic development and community revitalization.

At the core of the safe neighborhoods has been the construction of barrier emplacements. These emplacements not only block the free flow of arms, ammunition and explosives in and amongst Western Baghdad neighborhoods, but they also provide the local population with an increased feeling of security without a significant impact on the movement of local citizens. Random vehicle inspections

(1-5 CAV Continued on page 19)





DAGGER'S EDGE

Doing Great Things

Story by Sgt. Chad Ward



57th Signal Dagger's Voice

It was another exciting month for the 57th Signal Company! With the server room receiving a complete renovation, and the building's whole interior getting a much needed paint

job, it was clearly a month of change for these motivated signal Soldiers. With a few outstanding signaleers receiving promotions, as well as a few more reenlisting, it's clear the Soldiers of 57th Signal are exemplifying the

values of the BRO – "Duty First"! Here, SPC Brian Blackburn puts on his game face for the half marathon fun run. Hundreds of Soldiers arrived early to stretch out and warm up for the grueling 13.1 mile event that took place early Saturday, May 5th. All the Soldiers who completed the run received a special T-shirt and a medal to commemorate the event!

May 5th was also an exciting day for the 57th Signal Company's own 1SG Woody Carter, who or-

ganized and hosted the first ever INBF sanctioned Iraq Body Building Competition. Soldiers from all over Victory

Base Complex were involved in the show, competing in front of a full crowd at the division gym. The audience was large and motivated, cheering on all the competitors as they posed for ninety seconds each with a song of their choice. The competitors received Certificates of Achievement for their participation, as well as the winners of each weight class receiving trophies, weight lifting equipment and supplements. Great job to SSG McGowan from 57th SIG NETOPS for finishing 2nd in his weight class!



Spc. Blackburn gives two thumbs up just before starting a 13.1 mile marathon across Camp Liberty and Camp Victory. (US Army photo by Capt. Erik Booker, commander, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)



Contestants for the Body Building contest take a photo opportunity at Camp Liberty. (US Army photo by 1sg Woody Carter, 57th Signal Company)

(1-5 CAV Continued from page 18)

along major access routes are common throughout Baghdad, and pedestrian traffic in and out of safe neighborhoods remains unhindered.

TF 1-5 CAV's lead in these has increased our success at all the crucial points that insurgents actively use. Protective barriers around these key western Baghdad communities, safe neighborhoods, continue to provide another layer of security against the import of insurgent material into Baghdad. They have given the people of Ameriyah, Khadra, and Ghazalia a greater sense of security – an enduring security that will allow security forces, in conjunction with the local populace, to root out the remaining forces that vainly wish to prevent the development of a free and secure Iraq.





DAGGER'S EDGE



The winners from each weight class pose for overall winner in the Body Building competition. (US Army photo by Sgt. Lance Wail, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

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We are looking for any type of submissions to include:
letters, articles, comic strips or artwork, and photographs.

If you would like a copy of this issue please contact your Battalion UPAR

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1-5 Cav: Capt. Dustin Medeiros
1-7 FA: Capt. Jason Latella
57th Signal: Capt. Kyle Harvey

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